



## **VENTRAL HERNIA IN A WHITE-TAILED DEER**

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### VENTRAL HERNIA IN A WHITE-TAILED DEER

During March, 1970, a white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) with a large pendulous mass on the ventral abdominal wall was observed near Redvers, Saskatchewan. The deer moved slowly and was incapacitated to such a degree that it was easily approached and shot with a handgun by a local police officer.

The animal was submitted for necropsy to the Department of Pathology, Western College of Veterinary Medicine. The deer was a female, slightly in excess of 1½ years of age, in poor body condition with serous atrophy of all fat depots. The uterus contained twin fetuses. A soft, fluctuating globular mass 28 cm in dia-



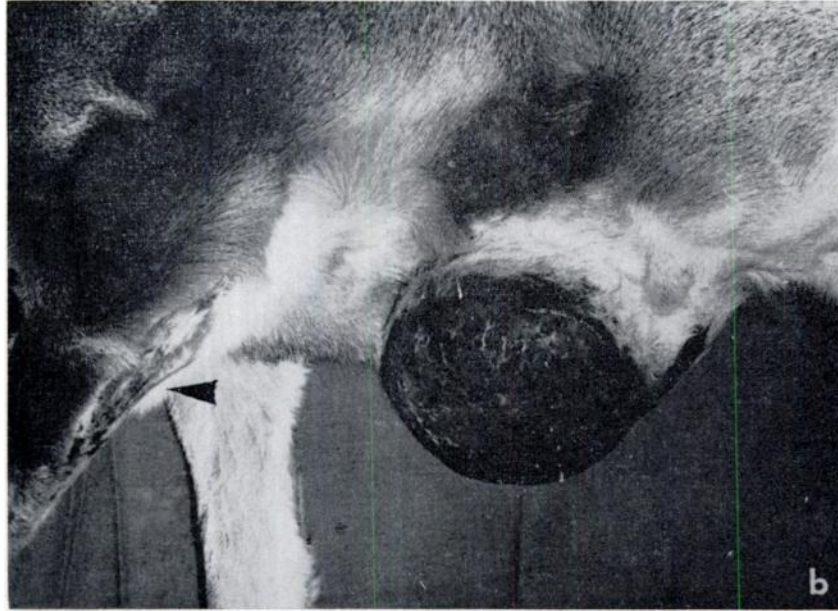
FIGURE 1. Ventral hernia

(a) right view

This One



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(b) left view, note loss of hair on left foreleg (arrow).

meter was present on the ventral abdominal wall immediately posterior to the sternum (Figure 1). The skin covering this growth was abraded and denuded of hair. The hair on the caudal surface of the left foreleg was worn in the area which would contact the mass during movement.

Reflection of the skin revealed a hernial sac which contained the entire abomasum, over half of the jejunum, the entire spiral colon, and an 8 cm portion of the ventral sac of the rumen. The 7.5 cm diameter hernial ring was smooth walled, and was located in the angle between the xiphoid cartilage and the last sternal rib on the left side. All structures in the hernial sac were freely moveable and reducible with the exception of the abomasum, the proximal and distal portions of which were tightly adherent to the hernial ring. The ingesta in all regions of the alimentary tract appeared normal. Histologically, the major portion of the wall of the hernial sac was composed of mature fibrous tissue.

Ventral hernias are relatively common in domestic animals, and are usually the

result of mechanical injury to the abdominal wall, (Jubb and Kennedy, 1963, *Pathology of Domestic Animals*, Vol. 2, Academic Press, New York and London), (Runnells *et al.*, 1965, *Principles of Veterinary Pathology*, Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa). In this case the presence of adhesions between the abomasal serosa and the hernial ring might support a traumatic origin for this hernia. There was no evidence that the hernia interfered materially with digestion; the poor condition of the animal may have been due to the physical presence of the hernia interfering with normal locomotion.

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